

## ADAPTING THE TDM-MODEL IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN HARGHITA COUNTY

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**Abstract.** *Starting from the necessity of strategy planning in regional and local tourism development, we will try to adapt the tourism destination management concept over several areas in Harghita county. Interdisciplinary research shows unfavorable situations for a sustainable tourism development, this is why there is a need for involvement proposals in the territorial administration, in the specific relations to the tourism system. The attractive resources sometimes are endangered by improper ways of exploitation, this proves the necessity that the government should get even more involved, even on the level of the local public authorities. As a result a new organizational model should be implemented, which should engage representatives of the enterprise sectors, of NGOs and of public institutions as well. The geographic structure of Harghita County (morpho-hydrographic, small urban polarizing areas, micro-regional identity, dispersion of attractive resources etc) proposes the elaboration of the Tourism Destination Management on different territorial levels: local, micro-regional, county and cross-county - regional. After the founding of a TDM Organization; which based on a well elaborated tourism development strategy would carry out this complex activity, and possesses its own necessary resources as well; the tourism within the county and its micro-regions could become more sustainable. This strategy holds the management of the hazards and risk elements as well.*

**Key words:** *tourism policy, tourism destination management, Harghita county, public-private partnership.*

### Introduction

In a recently published paper we were concerned with the concept of the Tourism Destination Management (TDM) focusing to the Giurgeu Basin, located in the northern part of the Harghita county. Now, we try to extend this concept to the whole county in the context of elaborating the Tourism Development Strategy of Harghita county. Elaboration of this strategy started in October 2008, by the signing of a contract between the County Council and a consulting company, located in the seat of the county, Miercurea Ciuc. The work began by assessing a project team, data acquisition and the consulting with the representatives of public administration (on county and settlement levels), then should continue with discussions with groups of tourism entrepreneurs and individuals from the non-governmental sector. The aim of

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planning process is that the involved parties in the county's tourism (enterprises, local authorities, NGOs) will elaborate a guiding document for their development efforts and investment objectives. This planning document should be a supporting instrument for the bottom-up built *tourism policy*, which will be coordinated by the county council in partnership with tourism stakeholders. It should be mainly a communication instrument, which points out the principles, priorities, guiding directions of tourism development in different areas from the county.

The concept of the TDM can be a theoretical framework for interpretation of the maintenance and influencing of the tourism system, which contains many different elements, like resources for attraction-development, basic and tourism infrastructure and superstructure, the management of tourism enterprises and so on.

### **1. Tourism Destination Management: What Is This?**

The TDM is a complex of activities, which is necessary for attracting visitors and providing them perfect travel sensations in the course of staying in destination whilst the circulation of tourists have positive effects on socio-economic and natural environment of the local communities both in short and in long term (Lengyel 2008). The aim of TDM is creating and maintaining a *competitive* and *sustainable* tourism system in a tourist receiving area. A *destination* is an area, which can provide a complex tourism product, the location of the supply in larger sense. The territorial product integrates tourism products defined both like macro products and microproducts (Michalkó 2007).

#### **1.1. Objectives and activities of TDM**

According to the TDM's aim, creating and maintaining a competitive and sustainable tourism, the objectives of tourism development could be conceived by adapting the *VICE-model*, and accepting the *double integration* of tourism in the course of the planning process (Lengyel 2008). Visitors, Industry, Community and Environment represents different interests both in economic and in social, cultural, environmental fields. These interests must be conciliated by the TDM's decision-makers. The double integration means that the elements of the tourism system must be integrated (internal integration), on the other hand, the tourism system ought to be integrated in the socio-cultural, economic, technical, political and natural environment as well (external integration). But, do the premises of a TDM really exist in the studied area? If we define the TDM like tourism policy at local/regional level (Hall 1994, Ritchie and Crouch 2003), we can identify some of the existing premises in the creating of a TDM (Horváth and Peteley 2008).

TDM includes the following activities: territorial planning of tourism development, adopting decisions concerning the implementation of tourism strategies, project generating, attracting investors, management of tourism resources and attractions, quality assurance of tourism services (accommodation, hospitality, entertainment, animation etc.), human resources management, education and professional forming, perfection etc. The planning has no sense, if regulations are not implemented referring to exploitation of tourism resources and to other aspects of the used land. The implementation of different types of plans (strategy, action plan, program and project) can be facilitated with financial support constructions of the national or international governmental organisms.

The membership of Romania in the EU allows the different stakeholders in tourism to access the financial support in the frame of Regional Operational Program, *Priority Axis 5: Sustainable development and promotion of tourism*. That includes 3 *Key Areas of Intervention*:

- Restoration and sustainable valorization of cultural heritage and setting up/modernization of related infrastructure
- Creation, development, modernization of the tourism infrastructure for sustainable valorization of natural resources and for increasing the quality of tourism services
- Promoting the tourism potential and setting-up the needed infrastructure in order to increase Romania's attractiveness as tourism destination.

Another financing source is the National Rural Development Program, which includes *Measure 313: Encouragement for the tourism activities*. This contains financing constructions for the small enterprises, for the local authorities and their associations, and for NGOs from different projects in rural areas. But it is most desirable, that the different development efforts should be integrated into a regional or county-level tourism development strategy, which can assure the synergy of these efforts.

### **1.2. TDM's actors**

Although the TDM organizations don't exist yet in the county, the process of elaborating the county's tourism development strategy is a first step to creating the premises of the TDM activities, under the coordination of the County Council. The effective players of the TDM should be different actors, like local and regional authorities, enterprises or their associations, non-governmental organizations and different institutions, depending on the essence of the respective activities. For example the spatial planning up to the present is an

attribution of national, county-level or local authorities (Law 350/2001 on Spatial and Urban Planning). The destination marketing is the responsibility of the Tourism Department; the tourism-specific education is the competence of state and private vocational schools, high schools and enterprises or foundations with specialized and acknowledged training. But the multiple activities relating the TDM should be integrated to manage efficiently the tourism system within a destination. That presumes the building of regional partnerships between the tourism's stakeholders (WTO 2000, Lengyel 2008).

Despite all, Harghita county isn't a tourism destination, it is an administrative-territorial unit, the council's competences explained that can be elaborated a county-level strategy, which integrates the concepts of the networks, formed at micro regional or settlements' level. The degree of the cooperation at this moment appear too low, thereby somebody, some institutional actor must initiate the forming of regional networks in the field of tourism development. The international examples, best-practices and the theoretical/methodological concepts (Ritchie and Crouch 2003, Aubert 2007, Lengyel 2008) constitute stimulations for the initiation of multiple co-operations between the regional stakeholders.

The probable building process of TDM – the adapting of TDM-model in Harghita county – began with elaborating of the strategy's offer documentation, based upon a research concept, titled *The Opportunities of a Tourism-Based Territorial Development in Szekely Land*, (in a first phase just in Harghita county). This research project-concept was offered in 2005 like the framework for a county-level tourism strategy, then, in 2008 the County Council accepted the offers of a consulting company, which collaborates with the Gheorgheni Extension of Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca. Like a parallel evolution, it was organized a conference having the main theme *Tourism and Territorial Development* held on September 2008 at the mentioned educational institution (Horváth and Peteley 2008). As a result, the education, the research and consultancy actors can become the propulsive elements of the tourism's system, within the destinations of the county.

The strategy elaboration began with a dialogue between the entrepreneurs and representatives of local authorities, manifested in focus-group discussions. The ideas of the participants will be integrated in the county's strategic plan for tourism development and hopefully a result of this gesture might be the creating of a real territorial partnership, to improve the quality of the tourism services, contributing to the more competitive supply of the county's micro regions. The main idea of the strategy for a better collaboration is the need of

an organization-system, like a network of micro regional associations not only in destination marketing activities, but in other TDM activities as well (mainly attraction management, quality assurance, education and training, political lobby, planning and tourism product development).

## **2. Harghita County: Tourism destination or a territorial unit to managing?**

### **2.1. A short historical overview and the context of tourism development**

Harghita County was created in 1968 from parts of a historical-cultural region named Székely Land (Ținutul Secuiesc or Secuime in Romanian, Székelyföld in Hungarian). In this region extends over three counties, Mureș, Harghita and Covasna, where *Székelys* live, (Siculians or Seklers), who are a regional community of Hungarian minority from Romania. The forming of Székely Land was a historical process, began from the colonization of the Székelys in the eastern parts of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom for the guarding the frontiers to the major administration reform in 1876, when the all-time self-government territorial entities were transformed in counties like in the other parts of Austro-Hungary (Horváth A. 2003, 2007; Farkas and Sós 2007).

After 1918 Transylvania was united with Romania and suffered few changes from the point of view of the public administration (MDLPL 2008a). With the exception of a short period, 1940–1944, when the northern and south-eastern parts of Transylvania were annexed/reunited to/with Hungary, the region populated by the Székelys/Seklers was administered in the context of Romania's centralized public administration, with a low level of self-government. In the present, in context of integration of Romania in the European Union, new opportunities appear in the decentralization process, and within this, the implementation of the subsidiarity, one of the main European principles of spatial/regional development (Law 350/2001 on Spatial Planning and Urban Planning and Law 315/2004 on Regional Development in Romania). The tourism policy is directed by the Tourism Department from the Minister for Small and Medium-Sized Companies, Trade, Tourism and Liberal Professions. The legislation related to organizing tourism activities (GD 58/1998 with their modifications) alludes to local authorities' role assumption in tourism development. But a conceptual framework does not exist or a guiding methodology to elaborate strategic plans or action plans. Recently the Master Plan for the Tourism Development in Romania was elaborated, which includes many purposes for the renewing the institutional system of tourism policy, but that document was not adopted either by the Government, or by the Romanian Parliament. It didn't become the law with effect on reforming the institutional system. However, some counties, some settlements yet have elaborated their tourism strategies.

On the other hand, it is elaborated the draft law relating Spatial Planning of the National Territory – sections VI. – Tourism, it is published the related substantiation studies, which contain a series of thematic maps and tables for each county (MDLPL 2008b). If the law will be adopted, the investments for tourism development will be oriented primarily to the so-called tourism zones, based upon the studies mentioned above.

The 40-year-old Harghita county includes several areas, so-called tourism zones, which can be developed efficiently only in collaboration with the neighboring counties' local authorities and tourism providers. There are small area-destinations like Salt Land (Praid – Sovata, Harghita and Mureş counties), Topliţa – Deda Defile and Călimani National Park (Harghita, Mureş, Suceava counties), Bicaş Gorge – Hăşmaş Mountains National Park (between Harghita and Neamţ counties), Ghimeş area (Lunca de Sus, Lunca de Mijloc and Ghimeş-Făget, Harghita and Bacău counties), the Ciomad – Balványos micro region and Rika micro region including local territorial-administrative units both from Harghita and Covasna county. Other tourism zones are situated in the historical-ethnographical well-outlined small areas, formed in valleys and basins in the mountain ranges of the Eastern-Carpathians, or by the Easter-Transylvanian hills (Farkas and Sós 2007, Horváth 2007).

The Law upon Local Public Administration (Law 215/2001) permits the creating of associations of local authorities and the different financing supports, promoting these forms of cooperation (e.g. call for proposals within Regional Operational Programme). Starting from the necessity of cooperation in TDM activities it is possible, that different associations for common product development efforts will be created and mainly to improve the efficiency of destination marketing, promotion and market research (Hall 1994, WTO 2000, Ritchie and Crouch 2003).

## ***2.2. The All-Time Performance of the County's Tourism, Reflected in Statistics***

The main statistical data about the tourism sector referred to accommodation supply and its usage. The development of the accommodation supply is an indicator of increasing interest of entrepreneurs related to the tourism-business, but the real evolution of the county's tourism competitiveness is reflected in evolution of number of tourists accommodated and overnight stays.

Since 2000 the structure of accommodation's supply in Harghita county is restructured as shown in Fig. 1. The hotels and urban tourist boarding houses have a slightly increasing share, and while the share of the *other types* of establishments decreases; the rural tourist boarding houses and the agrotouristic boarding houses show a significant growth (8x).

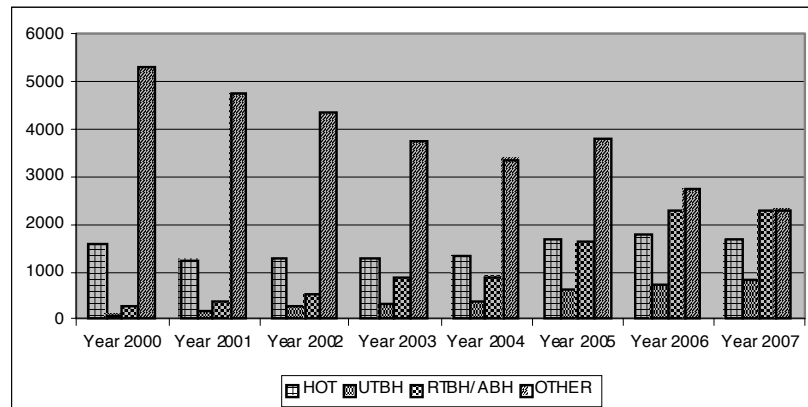


Fig. 1. Evolution of the existing tourist accommodation capacity in Harghita County (number of places), Source: The National Institute of Statistics: Tempo-Online time series ([www.insse.ro](http://www.insse.ro))

In 2007 the structure of existing tourist accommodation capacity in Harghita county differs essentially from the same supply offered on regional or national levels. The hotels' share is only 23% compared with the average value of the Center region (42%), or with the national average (60%). Although the urban tourist boarding houses show a spectacular growth between 2000 – 2007 (nearly 10 x), yet these share in total supply only 12%, similar with the regional average (13%) and more than the national average value (5%). The rural tourist boarding houses and the agro touristic boarding houses have the most important contribution to the county's accommodation supply (32%), more than the hotels' sharing and more than the regional (17%) or the national value (5%). These reflect an increasing interest manifested in investments in small tourist reception structures in the rural areas (55% of county's inhabitants live in rural areas, while the rural population represents 40% on regional and 44% of the national total).

The decreasing, but so far a big share of the *other types*\* of tourist reception establishments are the consequence of the tourism space structure, existing of some resorts of local interest (Borsec, Lacu Roșu, Izvoru Mureșului, Harghita-Băi, Băile Homorod and Praid) and Băile Tușnad, a spa resort of national interest. These resorts hold more touristic villas, with medium capacity

\* hotels for youth, hostels, apartment hotels, motels, inns, touristic villas (specific for resorts), touristic chalets (specific for mountain areas), hunt and fish chalets, bungalows, holiday villages, campings, touristic halting places, houselet type unit, school and pre-school camps, ships accommodation spaces

(20 – 50 number of places), but which became run-down after not being exploited for long periods of time. In some fortunate cases the villas were reconstructed.

We do not treat here in depth the structure of accommodation supply (by category of comfort for example), rather we analyze the evolution of circulation of tourists, reflected in accommodation statistics, like number of tourists accommodated and overnights. Between 2000–2007 the number of tourist accommodated in Romanian establishments grew from 4.92 million to 6.97 million tourists (+41.7%), in the Center Region this grew from 868 thousand to 1,33 million tourists (nearly 462 thousand, + 53 %). In Harghita County this growth was from 87 thousand in 2000 to more than 100 thousand tourists in 2004, then decreased to 85 thousand tourists, after a short period with increase came a descending period. The supply of tourist accommodation capacity continues to grow. The percentage of foreign tourists in this period was of 29.7% (almost 30 thousand tourists), in 2007 reached 26.3% more than Romania's average of 22.2% or of the Center Region's level (22.7%). These values of inbound tourism are less in case of overnights (max. 22.5%). In the regional circulation Harghita county has a decreasing share from 10% to 6% and in the number of total visitors from 9% to 7%. Fig. 2 shows an alarming image about the registered tourism demand in Harghita county.

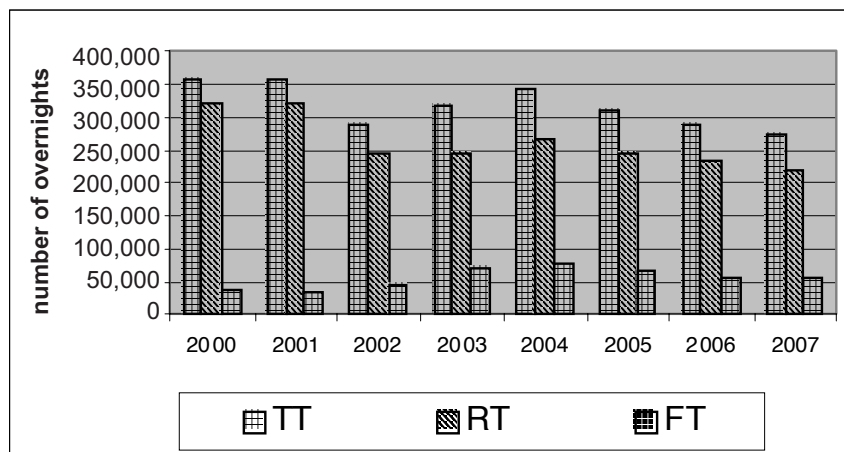


Fig. 2. Evolution of number of overnights in Harghita County,  
TT – total tourists' overnights, RT – Romanian tourists' overnights, FT – Foreign  
tourists' overnights, after data Source: National Institute of Statistics: Tempo-Online  
time series ([www.insse.ro](http://www.insse.ro))

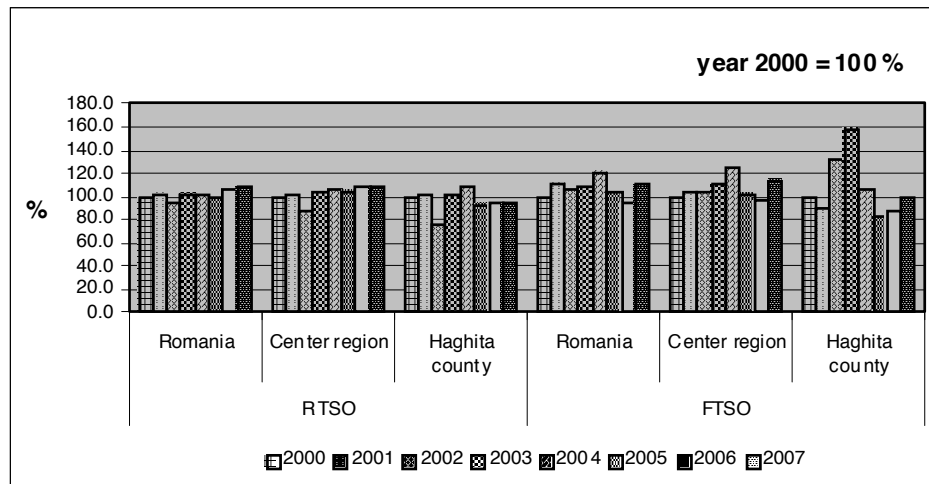


Fig. 3. Comparison of the evolution of number of overnights in Romania, Center Region and Harghita county, RTSO – Romanian tourists' overnights, FTSO – Foreign tourists' overnights,

Source: The National Institute of Statistics: Tempo-Online time series ([www.insse.ro](http://www.insse.ro))

The number of overnights is a performance indicator of the regional tourism, like the number of tourists also. The number of the tourists, registered by statistics, reflects the interest of tourist facing the regions supply, an effect of attracting visitors in these areas, number of overnight stays and the *average duration of staying* reflect the complexity of tourism products, which can or not retain the tourists for the different leisure activities.

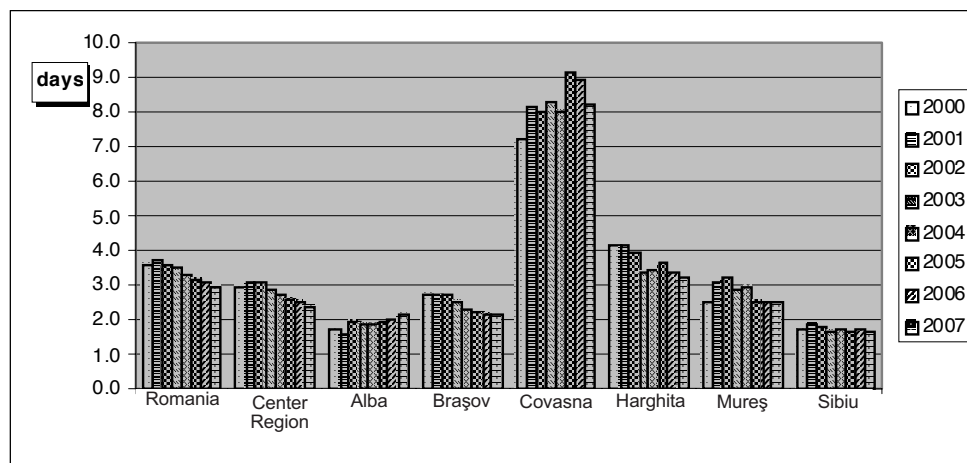


Fig. 4. Evolution of average duration of overnights in Romania, Center Region and in the Center Region's counties (2000–2007)

Source: The National Institute of Statistics: Tempo-Online time series ([www.insse.ro](http://www.insse.ro))

In a regional comparison Harghita county shows a relatively favorable image regarding the duration of stays, but also we can notice an overall decreasing trend. Covasna county's higher values can be explained by the importance of health tourism in Covasna Spa Resort.

If we compare the values of accommodation supply and the number of tourists accommodated, and mainly of the overnight stays we can deduce that in Harghita county there exists a trend of low exploitation of total accommodation capacity, below 30% (Fig. 5).

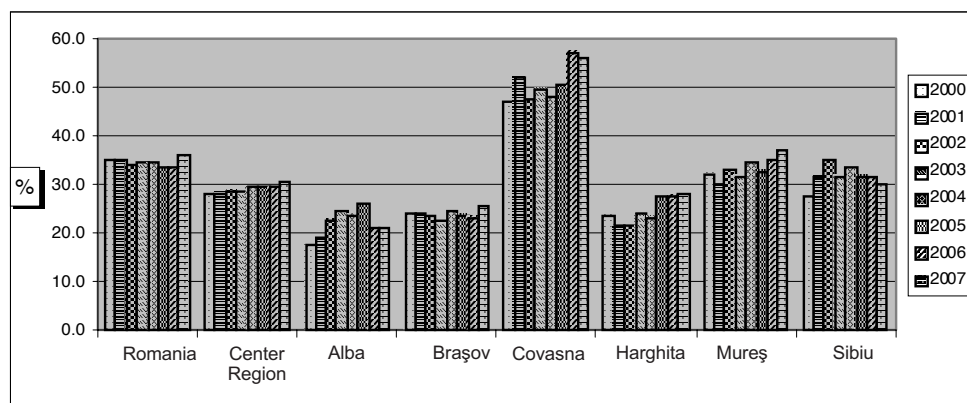


Fig. 5. Evolution of net use of capacity in the accommodation establishments in Romania, Center Region and in the Center Region's counties (2000–2007)

Source: The National Institute of Statistics: Tempo-Online time series ([www.insse.ro](http://www.insse.ro))

All these unfavorable trends have multiple effects, and raise challenges for tourism developers. If we want to keep tourism a significant economic sector in the county, we must elaborate and implement a better tourism strategy, which can contribute to the increase of number of visitors, their overnight stays and spending.

Accordingly, a great deal could be the creating and maintenance of new attractions and the promoting activities must be better organized. While the resorts are or can become the so-called flagships of the tourism development, we consider that the public and private investment efforts must be concentrated to these, and a growing attention must be oriented to its urban planning and environment protection, mainly to sustainable valorization of its natural resources. A specific aspect of the resort planning and development is the management of hazards and risks, both with natural provenience and of human origin.

### **3. Main Tourism Settlements, hazards and risks**

Although all statistics have shown, that the revenue indicators aren't showing promising or even progressively increasing incomes from tourism activities or services. But to balance the statistical indicators, observing the settlement administrations, its obvious that something positive is motivating the resident population to open towards this sector of the economy, and even gain some profit, which enforces their revenues by tourism activities.

The contradictory image of the statistical figures and the increasing number of boarding houses, motels, hotel (up to three stars), the appearance of catering facilities along the main roads, show an important aspect of the current Romanian tourism economy and its perception by the population. If the enterprises wouldn't show profitability, no one would invest, or expand. But we need to understand the difference of the offer and what the tourists expect.

Now the expansion of the administrative territory's boundaries, the frame of a healthy competitive market in tourism services is outlining. This requires after a while some level of organizing, association and cooperation with the local authorities, with the local administrative units and regional tourism information centers, as well with other organizations specialized in diversified tourism activities. To this association the TDM model and the elaboration of a commonly targeted county tourism development strategy is on of the answers that we promote.

The Ministry of Development, Public Works and Housing developed a new draft law on Spatial Planning of the National Territory – section VI. – *Tourism*, setting some new criteria in evaluating the tourism potential of the main territorial administrative units of the country (MDPL 2008b). By setting a newly adopted methodology and setting and base-elements they distinguished and defined the: natural tourism potential; the cultural heritage; the general and tourism specific infrastructures and the quality of the environment. As a result of the multilevel cooperation and consulting between the specialists within tourism and other experts in economy and administration a new classification model was accepted. This classification identifies:

- a.) natural tourism resources;
- b.) the cultural heritage;
- c.) Infrastructure specific to tourism;
- d.) Infrastructure for transportation.

The constant change in shape of the settlements, the growing interest towards tourism in several regions of the country, shows the involvement of the

population in this segment of the service sector. By the expansion of some settlements due to the construction of several accommodation facilities would this mean an increase of visitors as well? If this would be balanced this could increase significantly the living standards of the locals.

The government brought a new decision, considering the criteria and requirements defining the title of *tourism resort* or *spa* (Gov. Decision 852/13 August 2008, published on the Official Board MO 613/20 Aug. 2008). This decision defines all settlements or parts of settlements to be recognized as tourism resorts or spas (of national or local interest) if these present qualitative natural and human resources, which fulfill a set of well defined criteria, all elaborated in the decision's attachments. These criteria evaluate the potential of the natural environment; accessibility and communication infrastructure; urban infrastructure (the existence of hospitals and permanent medical assistance together with emergency units); water supply and waste water drainage system, electricity; accommodation and leisure facilities (including the permanent presence rescue squads or children playgrounds); tourism information centers and other criteria. These refer to transportation requirements, existence of conference centers and cultural establishments; sports complexes; marked and officially recognized tourism routes and communication network between the service providers.

According to this new system of evaluation, in Harghita county there are mentioned and approved several resorts. Baile Tusnad is the only one recognized as of national interest, along with six other settlements, which kept or were acknowledged as tourism resorts of local interest in 2008. These resorts are: Băile Homorod, Borsec, Harghita-Băi, Izvorul Mureșului, Lacu Roșu; all of these had this title before, but a new settlement received this title just recently, due to the promising efforts and progresses shown, namely Praid. Praid located just 10 Km from the town of Sovata, and 16 km from Sovata Resort, having similar environmental potential, as the other settlements in its vicinity, sharing the same salt mountains, diversifying the attraction elements and increasing its tourism circulation, became this year a resort of local interest, motivating the other four villages in the area to upgrade their offers, to increase opportunities and attractions. But its evolution and importance can only be enhanced by cooperation with the other settlements in its vicinity or even further in the county, by diversifying the tourists' experience. Association could be one of the linking elements in this matter.

In essence these types of settlements, with the title of tourism resorts form a special category, benefiting from the differentiated type of development plan.

They differ in specificity, services and in attitude; presents a different rate of development from the settlements engaged in rural tourism; are distinguished in development plans from national parks or natural protected areas. Some of them are punctual development strategies, others cover larger areas. The quality of tourism activities differ from one unit to the other. Consequently mass tourism appears mainly in resorts, concentrating the activities, services; these concentrate the housing, treatment, catering, and entertainment facilities in one area, increasing the economic output. This is what makes these resorts special, unique and emphasizes their special role and status within a region, county or area.

As a flagship of all resorts in Harghita County, in attractiveness and circulation, Praid, together with the other resorts prove, that in times of great economic depression, tourism can be the flagship of the local economy, can create new job opportunities, the TDM can offer solutions for associations, for training and consulting, can provide possibilities for rural development, and in time to increase living standards.

The personal involvement of the local population, their motivation of turning towards tourism activities, their association within a family of multi family businesses, under the management and guidance of a well organized TDM type association could lead to increased tourism circulation, better quality assurance, tourist satisfaction and enhanced experiences.

All tourism activities are based on the natural elements and on human efforts. Thus meteorological events, the weather, and sometimes enhanced by unscientifically carried out human activities can be hazardous and endanger all tourism activities. Some of these can be predicted, but some not. Some of them are just dangerous, and are called hazards, some of them have caused quantifiable damage, not just in the environment, but to human properties or even casualties, called risks. *Hazards* can be defined as: "a phenomenon or represents the probable state of a system, defined by the potential probability of manifestation, with a magnitude which exceeds a generally accepted limit, with estimable intervals of recurrence, within a time interval and space that can not be defined with exactitude". (Goțiu and Surdeanu 2007). As a perception the hazard is an accidentally generated phenomena, its occurrence being unpredictable, but with a certitude and probability of happening. With the problems raised by the hazards, Crozier and Glade (2005), defined a couple of terms utilized in the study of hazards, terminology that we shall take into consideration, while studying the environmental effects of these phenomena. In case of a hazard we need to analyze the origin of the

phenomenon, the type and subtype, the affected area, its character, the triggering moment and conditions, the affected environmental components, their effect upon the directly involved resident population, its probable frequency and after effects. Hazards can be classified as natural hazards, those phenomena where the probability of their occurrence is determining their status, and of human origin (Coppock, 1995) quoted by (Goțiu and Surdeanu, 2007).

In the studied region the most important thing concerning hazards is the adequate informing of the local population and the attitudes of the local political units. All these will summarize in a hazard management plan, conceived for emergency cases, and not just. The hazard as phenomenon, is a violent manifestation, its results can be felt in the changes provoked in the system's balance. By this we mean all material losses and qualitative changes in the environment or social activities, determined by some as disasters by others as a catastrophe. Either term is used; it determines the result of a hazard. For the managing of the natural hazards, according to the Natural Hazard Management, 1991, there are three measurements that need to be managed: actions adopted before the occurrence of a possible hazard; actions taken during a situation of crisis and post-crisis activities. In the first activity we can include the evaluation of a possible hazard; meaning the assessment of all the information which could help us identify a probable place where one hazard could occur, and the time when it might be expected. By the complexity and abundance of information, this prognosis is the result of a multi-scientific elaboration. With available data, an assessment can be outlined concerning the possible vulnerability of the region. All these steps are taken to increase public awareness and to reduce its effects. Forecasting, preparing and educating the local population for emergency situations could mean better chances for understanding and accepting the consequences of such incidents.

On the other hand, but under different point of view are the risks. The risks differ from the hazards as they assess and present the damages caused by the elements, and express them quantitatively. They are an effect of hazards and *vulnerability*. Vulnerability represents the ability of a system to respond or to behave in case of a hazard or stress factor. Represent the degree of exposure, the sensitivity in case of impact.

As a combined result of hazards and vulnerability that determine the risks, these can be of natural, human, technologic or ecologic. The risks present two major components; some are real (measurable exact facts) and another unreal (generated by the knowledge level of a society at a certain moment in time (Ianoș, 1994, quoted by Moldovan, 2003). The most important step in

case of hazards and mainly if risks are the management, the policies that are adopted, the level of organizing the local population and creating collaboration with the national intervention units. But for this first there is a need to assess the risk, then to evaluate the risk management-wise, and last but not least respond to the risk. This is why the government adopted a new legislation (OUG 21/2004) concerning the establishing of a unitary management system for emergency situations, an organism developed on different levels of competence and domains. The system is formed by: comities formed for emergency situations, National Organizations for Emergency Situations, public community services, operative centers and others. All these need to have a communication network, so that they can diminish the effects of risks. This can be enhanced and improved by organizations that have connections with most of the institutions and with the local communities. All these are required so that the damages and losses of a risk to be reduced, and the system to regain its original or improved aspect, to be able to perform its role as resort in the region, eliminating the element of repulsion for insecurity and lack of safety. This can alert tourists and have negative effects upon overnight stays in the resorts.

By creating association possibilities for the private investors, a linear communication between the local authorities and entrepreneurs can be managed by the active partners of a local TDM institution. By offering adequate information, organizing forums, public meetings, presenting data concerning information regarding all dangerous events, that could influence not only tourism related activities, partnerships and associations might be facilitated among settlements of parts of bigger urban areas. As a result the second and third steps can be carried out. The active parts know their role during a disaster, by managing and directing the rescue and assistance activities, supported by local volunteers. The organizing of the final stages includes the managing of the emergency state, of the transitional or clean-up stage and the reconstruction or stabilization stage. The later one could present a time consuming activity, but all of them require the involvement of the government and of specialized departments, designated to manage these tasks, together with the county council and local authorities.

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